

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chiba et al. (JP 2000-353413).

Claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of Colgan et al. (US 6,648,485) and Matsumoto (US 6,502,947).

Claims 12, 28, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of Colgan et al., Matsumoto, and Ochiai (US 5,703,667).

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of Colgan et al., Matsumoto, and Uchida et al. (US 6,805,925).

Claim 19-21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of Matsumoto, Colgan et al., and Winston et al. (US 6,044,196).

Claims 22, 23, 26, and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of Colgan et al..

Claims 33, 34, and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of Matsumoto.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication that claim 2, 9, 11, 14, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32, and 35 contain allowable subject matter.

Applicants further wish to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 4-6 are allowed.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended claims 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, and 21 to further define the invention, and canceled claims 1-3, 7-9, 12, 15-19, and 22-36. Accordingly, claims 4-6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, and 21 are pending for consideration.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chiba et al. (JP 2000-353413), and claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15-23, 26, 28, 30, 31, 33, and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chiba et al. in view of combinations of Colgan et al. (US 6,648,485), Matsumoto (US 6,502,947), Ochiai (US 5,703,667), Uchida et al. (US 6,805,925), and Winston et al. (US 6,044,196).

Applicants respectfully assert that claims 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, and 21 have been amended to be dependent upon at least one of allowable claims 4 and 5. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that all of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) are hereby rendered moot in view of the above amendments, and that claims 4-6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, and 21 are now allowable over the applied prior art. Thus, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for claims 4-6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 20, and 21.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner believe that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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